

CPYRGHT

Allen Welsh Dulles

The fruit of his life's work, in a very real sense, was the Central Intelligence Agency as it exists today. Allen Dulles was a professional spymaster—he recognized that the United States needed a professional intelligence service. This insight has hardly been shared by all. The rather naive view still lingers on that Americans ought not to engage in such a dirty business as spying on other countries.

Largely as a result of this attitude, this country lacked even the rudiments of an intelligence organization when World War II began. As intelligence buffs know, the gap was filled by Wild Bill Donovan's Office of Strategic Services — a happy band of socialites, explorers, professional athletes, professors, and some say even hardened criminals. Then came peace and most of these intrepid souls — with the exception of the criminals, one hopes — went back to their civilian pursuits.

Someone had to put intelligence work on a permanent footing during the ensuing cold war period. And Dulles, with his long years in the spy game and his important role in the OSS European network, was an obvious choice. It was he who established training programs for

promising university graduates, and in so doing made the CIA into a genuinely civilian outfit. He also proceeded to invest the agency with a capacity to gather intelligence and to conduct quasi-military operations.

It was this latter aspect of CIA's work that resulted in those occasional spectacular misfires. Yet as Dulles himself correctly pointed out, there were successes, too, that went unheralded along with the failures that spoke only too loudly for themselves.

Nowadays the CIA's star is somewhat in eclipse. It is considered fashionable to speak of "cold war warriors" as if the past 25 years of confrontation between east and west have largely been a matter of mental attitude rather than of underlying political realities. There also has been a tendency to give ever greater weight to the potential political embarrassment involved in intelligence operations.

Allen Dulles would be the first to warn of the dangers if the pendulum swings too far in the direction of caution. This could hobble our intelligence effort quite as much as a return to the days when we had no intelligence organization at all.